

changes possible. She is a woman who embodies the kind of leadership it takes to effect change. She kept her promises to the people of Florida. She not only changed Congress, she helped change America for the better by carrying out her duties with dignity and integrity.

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, before I start my special order this evening, I too want to add very brief appreciation and respect for remarks for Congresswoman TILLIE FOWLER, for her service and for her leadership, particularly her leadership in issues where women were not traditionally known to serve. I worked with her, albeit recently, as a member of the Women's Caucus, which works in a bipartisan manner on many, many issues. She is certainly a great leader, very much appreciated, and I want to thank her for her service.

Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today and this evening rather reluctantly, because some might say that any position on this issue dealing with the Mideast conflict would pose the concern and possibility of being politically incorrect, but I am so moved by the violence and the seeming inability to find common ground for an opportunity to continue the peace negotiations that I would like to pay tribute to a group of individuals in my community.

This article was noted in the Houston Chronicle on Monday, October 23, 2000, and the headline reads, "Faith Unite in Prayer for Mideast Peace." It seems that when nothing else works, it might be just a simple step for Americans to begin to unite in prayer in order to seek peace in the Mideast.

I remember as a teenager and young adult watching the Vietnam conflict and seeing on a regular basis the body bags coming out of that war. They are somewhat of the same feeling, though the numbers certainly have not reached that proportion. As I watched the controversy in the Mideast, this picture reflects the controversy of those running away in fear, but it does not reflect in totality the death, the loss of lives of dear children, the extreme violence, the extreme divisiveness, the fear, the hatred and seemingly the inability to solve this problem.

I believe it is important for both men who are at the center of this crisis to lead, to lead without fear and to demand an end to violence, and so I would like to share that my community, an extended community that is, determined that it was important to pray this past Sunday. The article

states, as the bloodshed continued in the Middle East on Sunday, eleven children in the Woodlands lighted a single white candle and prayed for peace. This gathering was one of Muslims and Jews and Christians of various denominations, who gathered to remind us that if nothing else works that we might pray to end the violence on the other side of the world.

A feeling of helplessness, a feeling of hopelessness has descended upon us as we see the tragedy of so many children dying, Rabbi James Brant of Congregation Beth Shalom told the Woodlands audience, but Brant suggested that the prayers of different faiths united could lead to an end to the killing and to the hatred and misunderstandings that have caused this tragedy. Its hopeful message was received well.

It seems now that one would wonder that this blurred confusion really cannot even point us to how it started, but the great heinousness of it all is the fact that people are no longer at the table of reconciliation and peace. There can be no resolve, no happiness, no outright ability to live with the quality of life that all of us would welcome if there is not peace in the Middle East between these two entities.

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No one will be happy. No child will live without fear. No one will worship without fear. So I believe that it is important to pay tribute to these two congregations that saw fit to have this at the South Montgomery County Community Center, sponsored by Congregation Beth Shalom of the Woodlands, the Islamic Society of the Woodlands and Faith Together, a fellowship of religious communities.

It can be done. Religions can come together and seek peace. For nearly two hours those in attendance read from prayers, asked for peace, children of different faiths, and poems written by Palestinian and Israeli children were read.

Madam Speaker, I would simply say we need to do as the people of Houston have begun to do, to simply pray and unite around the idea that they must come back to the table of reconciliation and peace.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE TILLIE K. FOWLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I wanted to come here this evening to pay tribute to our colleague who will be leaving us at the end of this 106th Congress, TILLIE FOWLER. Before I do that, I know that we have our colleague who will also be leaving us, JOHN PORTER from the great State of

Illinois. Although I could not be here for his special order, in that I had a commitment, a debate in my County of Montgomery, I did send JOHN a letter. But I do want him to know his friendship is so very special to all of us, and the work that he has done for the National Institutes of Health, which is located in my district, is extraordinary. He will forever be remembered for that.

Madam Speaker, as we talk about TILLIE FOWLER, who will be leaving us, she certainly has been a proven leader for her constituents, a fellow Member of this Congress, and, for me, a very dear friend.

Congresswoman FOWLER is known in the Fourth District of Florida as an advocate for the military. Her position on the Committee on Armed Services has allowed her to keep a close watch on defense funding. She has pushed for legislation for our brave military personnel that improves salary, gains benefits for families and ensures that they are the best trained in the world.

She has done a lot of traveling to many of our bases to also make sure that there is not sex discrimination that takes place, and I applaud her for the singular fashion in which she handled that challenge.

Beginning with her appointment as Deputy Majority Whip, Congresswoman FOWLER has risen in the ranks of the leadership and become the voice of reason in this increasingly partisan Congress. As a member of the Republican Steering Committee, she has been a force in seeing that leadership's agenda goes through Congress, is deliberated, and perhaps get the amendments as appropriate so it comes out as something we can all approve. The beginning of the 106th Congress saw her election as Vice Chair, making her the highest ranking woman in the majority party.

In addition, Congresswoman FOWLER was chosen as the Chairwoman of the House Page Board for her dedication to the outstanding experience and service that our page program provides, and also the fact that she believes in young people and making sure that they have experience, firsthand experience, here in Congress, which she sees, as we all do, as a very special institution.

Congresswoman FOWLER leaves the U.S. House of Representatives as a leader, as a proven legislator and as a friend to all of us. Her voice and her expertise are going to be missed. I applaud her accomplishments and wish her well in her future pursuits.

In reflecting upon her, she has always been fair, she has always been bipartisan, she has always been a coalition builder, and she knows how to wield a velvet glove to get things done.

Shakespeare's words perhaps aptly reflect TILLIE FOWLER: "Those about her, from her, shall learn the perfect ways of honor."

We again wish her well as she pursues whatever challenges and experiences